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MEMOIR OF DR. NEHEMIAH CLEAVELAND.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

SIR,—The following memoir of the late Dr. Cleaveland, of Topsfield, was prepared at my request by his son, Mr. N. Cleaveland, of Byfield. It was read before the Essex South District Medical Society, of which Dr. Cleaveland was a much respected member. No man amongst us set a better example of professional integrity and honor, and his son has drawn his character in colors, which, from the natural fear of being charged with filial partiality, are the reverse of being extravagant. The few who could boast of his friendship will long remember, with pleasure, the virtuous and kind-hearted old man, whose influence was uniformly and efficiently exerted in support of good order and the true advancement of society.

He died on the 26th of February, 1837, of a most painful disorder. Inflammation and slow ulceration attacked the stomach, and after occupying the superior third of the mucous and muscular coats, finally, a few days before his death, penetrated the diaphragm, and opened a communication with the thorax. The whole of this process occupied about a year, during every day of which his character beautifully developed the results of religious training and cheerful resignation to the will of God. Our American patent of nobility is *to come of a good stock*, and this inheritance the late Nehemiah Cleaveland, M.D., both received and transmitted.

Respectfully yours,

Salem, June 2d, 1839.

A. L. PEIRSON.

My father was born in Ipswich, on the 26th of August, 1760. His father, the Rev. John Cleaveland, was for more than fifty-two years minister of the parish, then known by the ancient Indian name Chabacco, and since incorporated as the town of Essex. I have no recollection of my grandfather, who died when I was but four years old. But his image, derived from oft-repeated description, is vivid before me. A clergyman of the old school—of erect port—urbans, yet dignified—an ardent, animated preacher—a faithful pastor, and a Christian patriot. In the French war he served as chaplain at Louisbourg and at Ticonderoga. In the war of the Revolution, he again became attached to an army; and at Cambridge, in New Jersey and New York, was heard imploring blessings on a cause which he believed to be that of justice and of God.

Catching his spirit, and following his example, three of his sons enlisted in the army. John, the eldest, had a commission as lieutenant. After his term of service expired, he devoted himself to theological studies, became an exemplary minister of the gospel, and died, lamented, about twenty-two years ago.

Parker, who was about two years younger, studied medicine, and had commenced the practice in Rowley (Byfield parish), before the revolutionary war broke out. He then obtained the appointment of assistant surgeon in the army. After serving a few months in that capacity, he returned to the more quiet scenes of domestic life, and a country practice. He had a mind uncommonly able and discriminative. Besides being a most observant, judicious and skilful physician, he was a thorough politician and sound theologian. He certainly had the ability and merit to have filled a sphere wider and more brilliant than that in which it was his lot to move. But he lacked the tact and worldly wisdom which enable a man to make the most of his advantages, natural or acquired. It was a common remark in regard to Dr. Parker Cleaveland, that, as a physician, he was too honest. His is by no means the only instance in the annals of medical men, where solid merit has been left to pine in neglect and poverty, while the ignorant and empirical, by flattering the caprices and indulging the whims of patients, have secured the business and enjoyed its emoluments. Dr. C. died eleven years ago, at the age of seventy-four. Two sons survive him, who inherit his talents, and stand high in public estimation.\*

Nehemiah was in his sixteenth year when he enlisted, as attendant on his father, in the army, then investing Boston. At a later period he served as a common soldier in New Jersey and at West Point. The remaining years of his minority were passed at home. Stripling though he was, on him devolved, at that critical and distressing period, the almost entire support of the family. He restored to good order the little farm which had suffered from absence, neglect and mismanagement. He devised ways and means—he labored hard with his own hands—and formed those habits of order, frugality and industry, which he maintained through life.

It was his father's wish, and conditional promise, that he should have a college education. But the formidable expense—the *res angustæ domi*—and the importance of his services at home, concurred to prevent. His early opportunities for instruction were exceedingly limited. The extent to which, amid cares and business, he supplied these defects in later life, strikingly exhibited the energy of his mind and character.

As soon as he was at liberty to do so, he entered his name as a student in medicine, with Dr. John Manning, of Ipswich, a good physician, at that time enjoying an extensive practice. He remained with Dr. Manning somewhat more than a year, and then completed his medical studies with his brother at Byfield. Just as he got ready to practice, a vacancy was made in Topsfield, by the death of Dr. Dexter. My father removed to that place at the close of the year 1783. Dr. Dex-

\* Parker Cleaveland, Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy in Bowdoin College, and Rev. J. F. Cleaveland, President elect of a college in Michigan.

ter left a handsome estate, the fruits of a practice somewhat extensive and lucrative. His library and stock of medicines were sold at auction. My father purchased them. The library—hear it, ye ill-starred doctors of later times, who must toil through many a wearisome tome, and whose shelves groan under a weight of medical lore—the library of this popular and successful physician consisted of just *two* books!

My father soon found employment. He early secured, and ever retained, so long as his health permitted him to attend to it, the larger and better part of the medical practice of the place. He was likewise often called into the neighboring towns, Ipswich, Hamilton, Wenham, Middleton, Boxford, and particularly Danvers.

Very soon after coming to Topsfield, he received a commission as Justice of the Peace, at that time a distinction of some value. This appointment opened to him an additional field of labor. He turned his attention to those points of law and statute which come within the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate, and soon qualified himself to discharge his duties with accuracy and fidelity.

In 1787 he married Lucy, eldest daughter of his instructor, Dr. Manning. She was a lady of great excellence, but died in 1791 without issue. In the following year he was again married to Experience, daughter of Dr. Elisha Lord, of Pomfret, Conn. By this connection he had nine children. Three died in infancy. The others, with their mother, survive.

At this period of his life he was often employed as a referee, often on committees for laying out roads, and other matters of the kind, which require a knowledge of business and a sound judgment. In 1811 he was chosen into the Senate of this Commonwealth. In 1819 he was ousted by the operation of the Gerrymander law. But the change in public sentiment, produced by that high-handed measure, restored him in 1815. He retained his seat by successive elections until 1819, when he declined being a candidate. I am not aware that while a member of this body he ever engaged in debate. In this respect he felt, probably, an unnecessary diffidence. In comparing himself with others, he thought too much of his early disadvantages. But his weight of character, his knowledge, judgment, and good sense, were felt and acknowledged by his associates at that board. Among them were some of the first men in the State—men whose approbation was *praise*—and who, then, and ever after, when occasion offered, evinced that he had secured their esteem and regard.

In 1814 my father was appointed a Session Justice of the Circuit Court of Common Pleas. From 1820 to 1822 he was Associate Justice of the Court of Sessions, and in 1823 he was appointed Chief Justice. For this station he was well fitted by his knowledge of business, his sound discretion, and his unyielding firmness in all questions of principle and duty. This station he retained until 1828. From that time he was engaged in no public business.

In 1824 he received from Harvard University the honorary degree of Doctor in Medicine. This attention was not less pleasing, in that it was equally unsought and unexpected.

Dr. C. was just six feet in height. His form was erect, dignified, commanding. Until past thirty, he was spare and slender. He afterwards became corpulent—weighing, at one time, two hundred and sixty-five pounds. Yet such were the height and proportions of his frame, that his corpulence never materially injured its symmetry. His health, until he was about fifty years old, was uncommonly firm. He shrunk from no exposure—sunk under no hardship. His first severe sickness he supposed at the time to be an attack of colic. A repetition of the attack, attended by clearer symptoms, convinced him that his sufferings arose from urinary calculi. The debility and emaciation produced by these attacks of excruciating pain were very great. He felt that his constitution was broken up, and that his lease of life had probably dwindled to a span. Though he at length recovered, in a good degree, his strength, and resumed attention to business, he never after regained his former firm health. He continued to be subject to attacks of severe pain and confinement, and scarcely ever rode without feeling more or less uneasiness. A sulkey, which he used constantly for the last twenty-five years, was the only vehicle in which he could ride with tolerable comfort. Whether this was owing to its greater easiness, or the peculiar nature of its motion, may be a question of some interest with medical men.

Knowing that you are familiar with the principal circumstances of the long and painful illness which preceded his death, I deem it the less necessary to enter into detail. The beginning of that illness was manifested by severe pain after taking certain articles of food. The same result successively followed the use of other things, till, at length, there was no article of solid food, and but one or two liquids, which he could take without distress. These privations and pains, with many which seemed to result from other causes, he bore with equanimity and resignation. To the end of life—in opposition to the opinion and wish of friends and of physicians—he declined almost entirely the use of those narcotics which would have relieved his pain, lest they should deaden his intellectual and moral sensibilities.

A brief allusion to some of his personal traits will not, I trust, be deemed unbecoming. A slight acquaintance with my father would suffice to identify him with a school which has passed, or is fast passing, away. He was nursed in the puritan strictness of earlier times. His character, early formed and invigorated under the pressure of hardship and stern necessity, and amid the thrilling scenes of the Revolution, exhibited in his maturer years the strength and firmness which might be expected from such training. There was no effeminacy about him. He regulated his life with the closest regard to principle. If his strictness sometimes bordered on severity, his severity was of the wholesome kind. With all this, his natural sensibilities were quick and tender.

In public affairs and political questions, he took, from his first entry into active life, a lively interest. Of his political opinions his children will never feel ashamed, for they can say that they were those of Hamilton, Jay, and Washington. In politics his course was decided and unwavering. With the class, so numerous of late years, who fashion

"their doctrines to the varying hour," he had neither fellowship nor sympathy.

As a physician, he was much esteemed by those who had opportunity to learn his worth. He made, indeed, no pretensions to extensive medical lore—he attempted no difficult surgical operations. But he had—what all the schools of medicine cannot of themselves supply—an observing mind, a retentive memory, a good judgment, and a high sense of responsibility. Nor did he, like too many country physicians, neglect the reading of medical books and journals. His practice was always prudent and cautious—qualities which young and ardent physicians are not apt sufficiently to admire. He was punctual in attending to calls, and kind and cheerful in the sick room. He possessed, in a high degree, the qualities which ensure to a physician the confidence and attachment of his patients. These feelings were often and very strongly manifested. Amid the strife of parties and the collision of rival interests, a man so decided and active could not be without opponents. These he had, and bitter ones. Yet it was no uncommon thing to hear even the bitterest say, that Dr. Cleaveland was a *good physician*—while they gave every proof of sincerity by employing him still.

The position of a medical man in a small country village is, in some important respects, very different from that of the city practitioner. The division of labor, in large towns, very naturally shuts the physician up to his chosen and appropriate sphere. But the country doctor will find many opportunities and calls to do good, for which the faculty, as such, give no prescriptions. Happy he, who has the power and disposition to meet such calls. During the fifty years of my father's practice in Topsfield, few days probably passed, when his opinion or assistance was not sought in some matter aside from his profession. I believe, too, that I shall be borne out by those who knew him best and longest, in saying that there were few occurrences or questions, incident to common life, in regard to which he had not formed an opinion, or could not give judicious advice. Indeed the mere fact that through so long a series of years confidence continued undiminished—the oracle being consulted to the very last—proves that the responses had not been found unsafe or fallacious. The happy influences of so long a course of beneficent action are not to be estimated. How many quarrels have been arrested—how many lawsuits prevented—how much needless expense and trouble saved, in a thousand instances, by the timely, the un-feed advice of a judicious and peace-making neighbor.

I should do injustice to my own feelings, and to my father's memory, should I conclude this imperfect sketch without making mention of his religious sentiments and character. In these matters—all important as he deemed them—of belief and practice, his course was open and decided. Trained in the orthodoxy of primitive times, his early opinions were confirmed by the personal and careful investigation of his maturer years, and he was abundantly able to give a reason for his faith, as well as his hope. Opinions so decided—so cherished—could not be without their influence; they moulded his character and shaped his conduct. The diffusion of truth—the suppression of vice in every form—the

spread of religion, pure and undefiled—were objects for which he loved to pray—for which he labored, and to which he contributed liberally of his substance. Yet after a long life employed in doing good, his hopes, his dependence, were in Christ alone. Thus sustained, thus soothed,

“Faded his late, declining years away.”

Thus sustained, thus soothed—from the midst of the affectionate circle which had learned of him to venerate true worth—with undisturbed serenity, and undiminished hope, he sunk gently to the tomb.

#### LETTERS FROM THE WEST.—NO. 1.

LEXINGTON, KY.—MEDICAL SOCIETY.—MEDICAL SCHOOL.—DR. DUDLEY.

*To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

DEAR SIR,—I am now in one of the most delightful cities of the West, enjoying the hospitality of good-hearted Kentuckians, and associating daily with medical gentlemen who are well known throughout our country, and who have long sustained a reputation which renders them ornaments to our profession. I have a great deal to tell you, and scarcely know where to commence or how to proceed. You are aware, I presume, that Lexington, for a great number of years, was the focus of medical science in the West. Here were assembled, as early as 1810, the most distinguished members of the profession, perhaps, at that period in the Mississippi Valley. And she still sustains her high standing. She ranks equal with her sister cities in point of medical talent, but finds pretty active rivals in Cincinnati and Louisville. Near about the time I have mentioned the Lexington Medical Society was organized, the first institution of the kind ever formed in the West. In 1815 the foundation of a medical school was laid, but it was not fully organized until the fall of 1819. This created great excitement among the principal medical men of Lexington, and led to a great deal of bitter animosity. Dr. Drake, of Cincinnati, who was chosen one of the lecturers, and Dr. Dudley, the lecturer upon anatomy and surgery, became involved in a severe controversy, and, for a short time, the prospects of the young school were by no means brilliant.

It will be proper here to state that the project had in view was to establish a medical department of Transylvania University, and although, as I have before stated, this was not effected until 1819, yet the association of physicians, who were at this time delivering lectures, by leave of the University, was styled “The Medical College of Transylvania University.” As a specimen of the sarcastic talent of the two gentlemen engaged in the public controversy, I will extract a sentence or two from their pamphlets. Dr. Drake was charged by Dr. Dudley with an attempt to destroy the College. He founded his charge chiefly upon the facts that he left Lexington and started a medical school at Cincinnati. Dr. Drake came out in a lengthy pamphlet, denying the charge. Dr. Dudley replied. From this reply I make the following extract. “But, sir, what will the learned say, on being told that Daniel Drake,



author of the "Picture of Cincinnati," he whose name is already enrolled in the proud list of American literati, is also the author of a pamphlet, unprecedented for its low vulgarity, unequalled for its abuse of individual character. Surely botany, mineralogy and geology, those high departments of science to which you have invited public attention, acknowledge no alliance with that low art of which the grovelling technicality consists in liar, scoundrel and villain."

Shortly after Dr. Dudley's pamphlet appeared, Dr. Drake came out in a "Second Appeal" of thirty-four pages duodecimo. From this I send you the following extract. "As Dr. Dudley has given us to understand, in the second line of his book, that he is a scholar, it may not be amiss to devote five minutes to a consideration of his character as an author. As far as I know, Dr. Dudley is the author of three different works: an inaugural dissertation—a letter addressed to me, inserted in my first appeal—and the pamphlet before me. The first ought to have been suppressed by his friends, and should not now be dragged before the public; the second would be a fair subject for criticism, if its grammar, orthography and punctuation, were not so wretched as to sink the dignity of any reviewer who might condescend to touch it. \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* I now proceed to an examination of the *chef d'œuvre* of the doctor's literary labor—his pamphlet."

This is the way they used to quarrel here, and I can assure you the spirit is kept up to this day. Every medical school which has since been organized in the West, save the Lake Erie Institution, has commenced with a big quarrel. One school, indeed, projected by Dr. Drake (the medical department of Miami University), was quarrelled out of existence before it had time to breathe completely. The enmity between Dr. Drake and Dr. Dudley has long ago been adjusted, and they are now on friendly terms. The breach between them was healed in two or three years subsequent to their controversy, so that the little extracts I have given will serve as matters of merriment.

The medical department of Transylvania University went into successful operation with the following faculty, the first ever organized west of the mountains—Drs. Dudley, Caldwell, Brown, Richardson and Blythe. The first session the school numbered 37 pupils and 7 graduates. Its increase has been gradual, until now it averages 260 pupils and 75 graduates. Several changes have taken place in the professorships from time to time, and a few difficulties have occurred recently, which for a time seemed to blight the prospects of the school; but I believe no serious injury has been sustained, and Transylvania bids fair to flourish. The faculty now consists of the following gentlemen: Dr. B. W. Dudley, professor of Anatomy and Surgery; Dr. Cross, professor of Institutes and Medical Jurisprudence; Dr. N. R. Smith, professor of Theory and Practice; Dr. Wm. H. Richardson, professor of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children; Dr. Thomas D. Mitchell, professor of Therapeutics and Materia Medica; Dr. Robt. Peter, professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy. The late munificent endowment of the city council of Lexington (\$45,000), will enable the trustees to obtain every requisite material for the advancement of the

school. And they are losing no time. A splendid medical hall will be erected by the ensuing session, and one of the professors is now on his way to Europe to obtain books and apparatus.

No man enjoys a more extensive reputation than Professor Dudley. His character as a surgeon is established in Europe and America; and as a lithotomist, he certainly has not his superior in the world. His practice (medical and surgical) is remarkably simple. I have heard him disapprove of the many complicated surgical apparatuses for fractures, dislocations, &c., of modern times, and declare that the bandage, properly applied, would entirely supersede their use. He never makes use of splints of any kind in his dressings, applying nothing but the bandage. This he does in such a manner that the muscles involved in a dislocation or fracture are so completely paralyzed that the injured parts are left quietly to restoration, while at the same time the pressure exerted, although very powerful, is so uniform that the circulation is not disturbed.

In operating he uses few instruments, but they are well selected. He does not approve of lithotrity, lithontripsy, or any of the improvements upon Civiale or Heurteloup; preferring, always, the plainest possible style of lithotomy. In the administration of medicines he observes the same simplicity. Calomel, t. emetic, opium, ipecac, and a few of the vegetable cathartics, constitute almost his entire materia medica. If I am not mistaken, he has never, in his life, administered a grain of morphine or ten grains of quinine.

As a lecturer he is generally admired. His language is plain and forcible, and conveyed with an impressive diction. He has written but very little for the press, and probably never will write anything of the character of a volume. He has been promising the medical classes in Transylvania, for the last eight or ten years, to publish a work on surgery, by the ensuing session; but it has never appeared. In his private life he conducts himself in a manner which renders him worthy the admiration of all. He is quite affable in his manners, and pleasant in his conversation. He is small in stature. I suppose his age must be fifty-five or sixty.

My letter, I think, is about as long as it ought to be, and I shall close. My next will probably be from Cincinnati.

Your friend,

Lexington, Ky., May 20, 1839.

W. J. B.

#### CASE OF CHOREA, WITH REMARKS.

BY EDWARD WARREN, MD.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

WHEN called to a case of chronic nervous disease, especially if it be of spasmodic character, it is seldom that we can have any very sanguine hopes of seeing any immediate benefit produced by our remedies. On the contrary, we have to apprehend that the affection will baffle all our efforts to subdue it, or that it will only yield after an obstinate and perplexing resistance.



Of late years, the treatment most universally considered as beneficial in chorea, has consisted in the exhibition of purgatives. Antispasmodic remedies were of course naturally resorted to, and tonics have their advocates. Others, considering that the disease is generally excited by worms, rely principally upon anthelmintics. On the whole, however, there is perhaps a greater union of opinion upon the treatment of this, than of most other diseases.

Chorea is generally preceded by habitual constipation, furred tongue, diminished or morbid appetite, and very frequently by worms.

The case I have to relate has little in it that is peculiar, but it affords a good illustration of the effect of remedies, from which benefit was derived earlier than is generally to be expected.

The grand object to be held in view in affections of this kind, is in the first place to remove all sources of irritation from the stomach and bowels, and to bring them into a healthy state. The second object is to give tone to the nervous system, where, as in most cases, tone is required; or to remove plethora when the disease exhibits the entonic character. I believe, however, that entony is rarely a cause of nervous spasmodic affections. Spasm is far more generally the result of weakness than of strength.

May 19th.—I was desired to visit A. B., a lad of about thirteen years of age, of spare habit. He had for about eighteen months past been subject to spasm of the facial muscles, which had gradually increased, and extended to the whole body. I found him to be of a very shy, timid disposition; any observation increasing the convulsive motions, which were incessant, to a great degree. Before the affection commenced, he had been subject to worms, and had passed several of great length within a day or two before I saw him. His tongue was thickly coated, bowels constipated, appetite voracious. He had received medical advice a year before I saw him, but the effort to swallow the medicines produced such violent spasms, that they were abandoned. His sleep was uneasy and frequently disturbed; and a severe paroxysm came on every night soon after he went to bed. He had also pain in the small of the back.

In order to obviate the difficulty produced by taking disagreeable medicines, I directed pills composed of calomel, jalap, rhubarb and aloes combined, which by their being minutely divided he was able to swallow in sufficient quantity to act as a powerful purgative. He was confined to a strict but nourishing diet, friction and rubefacients applied to the spine, and an anodyne pill given at bed-time every night.

On my second visit I found him much better. The medicine had operated powerfully, the spasms were less, the tongue much cleaner, and the appetite more moderate. The pills were continued every other night for a little over a week, and his improvement was rapid. I next directed him to make use daily of a cold shower bath, to which at the time he showed no aversion.

On my subsequent visit, he was not quite so well. The shower bath had excited violent spasms in consequence of his dread of the cold water, and his nervous system had not recovered itself when I saw

him. I advised, therefore, that no further attempt should be made to use the shower bath; but that he should gradually accustom himself to the use of cold water by sponging daily, and employing it more and more freely until he became habituated to it. After the sponging, friction was employed for some time every morning, and then the rubefacient wash applied to the lower part of the back. This wash was of sufficient strength to create some irritation, but not to remove the cuticle. The friction was repeated at night.

June 2d. Much better. Finds no difficulty in sponging with cold water. The nocturnal paroxysms have entirely disappeared.

After he had continued the purgative course for about a fortnight with great benefit, I directed him to take the tincture of muriate of iron, in rose water, with syrup of orange peel, about fifteen drops three times a-day. This was continued for a week or two, when the sulphate of quinine was substituted. After a short time longer, he had become so habituated to the use of medicines, and had acquired so much confidence in their efficacy, that I ventured upon a trial of a preparation containing turpentine, in which, however, the taste was as much disguised as possible. He took this without much difficulty, and he continued to improve. No perceptible benefit was derived from the turpentine; no more worms were passed; and after a short trial it was discontinued. The iron and quinine were resumed and given alternately, and cathartics as occasion required. It appears to me that much of the benefit of tonics is often lost, and bad consequences are frequently produced by them, in consequence of sufficient care not being taken to keep the bowels in a cool state and free from irritation, by the occasional exhibition of a cathartic or laxative, and by preparing the way for them in this manner before they are commenced. In most cases, a tonic will act much more beneficially if preceded by a cathartic.

I continued to visit my patient until the first of August. His improvement had been steady and progressive, his appetite was healthy, tongue clean, no pain in the back. He rested well without opiates, and had no nocturnal paroxysms. The convulsive motions were now slight, and less frequent. To complete the cure, I advised his removal into the country.

*Boston, June 10th, 1839.*

#### CREOSOTE IN APHTHÆ.

A MEDICAL friend, residing in Virginia, makes the following remarks at the close of a letter.

"I wish to propose to Dr. Hitchcock, for consideration or trial, the use of creosote in aphthæ of the œsophagus, &c. A remedy for chronic aphthæ is a desideratum in these parts. My friend, Dr. W. A. G., is pursuing such a remedy with great ardor. He writes me that he has a case now on hand, of a truly obstinate character. The generality of physicians, I suppose, would pronounce *creosote* dangerous in such cases, if not entirely inefficient.

We are making a trial, in this neighborhood, of the *ioduretted Hydrag.*

*potass.* in doses of about 5 drops, in a case of inflammation about the eye. Some have pronounced it a case of cancerous character. The sight of one eye has already been destroyed. The iodine has been used for some time for the purpose of reducing a small tumor near the canthus of the eye. The gentleman whose eye is thus affected is a wealthy and truly respectable citizen, and of course we feel a delicacy in mentioning his name or in pronouncing it a cancer. We should be glad, however, of any information concerning the *io. hy. potass.* in such a case."

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**BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.**

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BOSTON, JUNE 19, 1839.

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**HISTORY OF AMERICAN SURGERY.**

THROUGH all the changes that have taken place in our country, from the earliest period of its civilization down to the present moment, surgery has been skilfully and successfully practised. Even before the revolution, there were operators of distinguished attainments settled in the colonies, who not only closely followed the systems taught in Europe, where most of them had been educated, but they exhibited a boldness and ingenuity that won the confidence of the people. In the great struggle for independence, men of every rank and condition from the old world rushed to the theatre of war, and generously assisted, by their superior advantages, in laying the foundation of those institutions which now give so much character to the United States. Both physicians and surgeons from England, France and Germany, felt a sympathy for the oppressed, and the patriotism which influenced them to leave the polished circles in which they moved at home, to join the needy armies under the renowned Washington, should never be lost sight of by posterity. The first native operators had their instruction, therefore, from persons who were qualified in the best schools and hospitals of Europe. From the very beginning, in fact, operative surgery has not been obliged to contend with those embarrassments which have characterized the domain of clinical medicine. While physic has had its brigades of ignorant pretenders, the art of surgery has rarely fallen into ignorant hands.

Here in New England, the late eminent Dr. John Warren, of Boston, and Dr. Nathan Smith, of New Hampshire, enjoyed a merited reputation which few or none, perhaps, in modern times, can expect to obtain. Their fame extended over a vast extent of territory, and even at this day their authority is quoted with an air of confidence. Dr. Le Prelate, an uncommonly accomplished surgeon, who came from France and settled in the neighborhood of this city, should by no means be lost sight of in chronicling the chirurgical events of the north. To these wonderful men, succeeded the present Dr. Warren, of Boston; Dr. Twitchell, of Keene, N. H.; and a host whose names and exploits are familiar, who are located in various places—the central points, from whence a widely-extended fame is continually increasing.

In New York, without going further back than the memory of the late

Dr. Post, most interesting details might be furnished, of importance to the historian of the art.

These thoughts took their rise in consequence of ascertaining that John R. W. Dunbar, M.D., of Baltimore, is earnestly engaged in collecting materials for a work on the history of American surgery. The labor could not have been voluntarily undertaken by a more competent person. It necessarily embraces a long period of time, and will oblige him to collect the personal biography of a multitude whose influence is still felt, while their names, if much longer neglected, will be wholly lost to the archives of fame.

It will be a praiseworthy act to favor Dr. Dunbar with sketches of characters, reports of surgical cases, together with newspaper accounts of olden times, when properly authenticated. Series of the first medical journals published, with the uninterrupted files, are indispensable to him, and we venture to hope that the profession, in every part of the country, will transmit, for his use, all such auxiliary assistance as may be at their disposal. Pamphlets, inaugural discourses on the occasion of the induction of a teacher to a chair of surgery, together with manuscript notes of gentlemen, taken during their pupilage, will all be serviceable in enabling the compiler to complete the history in a manner acceptable to us all.

As the subject is extensive, embracing a broad geographical field, it is hardly possible that the public should be gratified with the result of the author's inquiries and researches very speedily. There is no pressing necessity for hurrying it through the press in an unfinished condition—a few years, if years are required, are of but little consequence, compared with the importance of having facts properly arranged, and judiciously selected. Dr. Dunbar has certainly taken up unoccupied ground, which promises an abundant harvest. He has nothing to fear from competitors, and consequently if he does not secure an imperishable name for himself, while rescuing the memories of others from the accumulating dust of ages, the world—especially that part of it included within the boundaries of North America—will wonder how it happened.

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*American Medical Almanac.*—The first edition of two thousand copies, of that useful medical remembrancer, the American Medical Almanac, met with such rapid sale, that an edition of *six thousand* is contemplated in the second number of the series, for 1840. Gentlemen are respectfully requested to favor us with such statistical materials as will most conduce to the general utility and interest of the work. All medical associations, the names of presiding officers, locations—whether of State, county or town, are solicited. Statistics of American hospitals, with names of the principal medical officers, term of office, compensation, annual number of patients, &c., in the cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the States of North and South Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana, are greatly desired, from competent sources. Facts, in the fewest words, will be highly acceptable. All such papers, however, should reach us before the 15th of August, to be serviceable in constituting the pages of the next volume of the Almanac.

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*Deep-seated Disease of the Bones.*—By looking back to page 256 there will be found detailed, in a general manner, the condition of a boy in Charlestown, Mass., who is suffering excruciating agonies, from time to

time, by what is supposed to be a disease of the anterior tibial nerve. With reference to that case, Dr. Comstock, a learned practitioner of medicine, residing at Lebanon, Conn., has kindly related the following, which certainly bears a striking analogy to the one referred to.

"In further reflecting upon the boy's case at Charlestown, an instance occurred to me of a man who had a pain in his foot, which, from its intensity and his long-continued suffering, he at length was anxious to have amputated. This was done in my presence. The foot was afterwards dissected, and it appeared that an acrimonious humor had eaten away a part of the end of one of the bones—one of the metatarsal bones, I think. At any rate, the bone eaten or eroded was left with three sharp points, as much like saw-teeth as anything. There was no caries, and I hardly consented to the amputation. Now had assiduous blistering or an issue been used, the limb might possibly have been saved. There was no swelling, and the injured part was not more than half an inch in width. As a slight injury appears to have been the cause of the boy's suffering, I have an impression that the bone may possibly be injured, as Sir Henry Hallford found to be the case in some cases of tic douloureux. If so, remove the injured spot with the trephine. This would have saved the man's foot."

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*U. S. Dispensatory.*—We learn that Drs. Wood and Bache are preparing for the press a new edition of the United States Dispensatory. This will be the fourth edition, and, like the preceding, will probably be a large one. This excellent work is now generally introduced throughout the United States, and is equally necessary to physicians and druggists.—*Medical Examiner.*

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*Belladonna in Erysipelas.*—At the last meeting of the Medical Society of London, the members were occupied with a discussion on the treatment of erysipelas.

Mr. Headland made some remarks on the great variety of treatment recommended by various teachers in this disease, a fact which he thought an opprobrium to the science of medicine. He had read some cases reported in the *Lancet*, in which Mr. Liston had employed the extract of belladonna, in small doses, with great effect. He (Mr. Headland) had since tried this remedy in three cases, and the effects were most satisfactory—more satisfactory, indeed, than those from any other remedies which he had ever employed. From the good effect of belladonna in scarlatina, as well as in the disease in question, he believed that it possessed a specific action upon the skin.—*London Lancet.*

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*The Fetus free from the Operation of the Imagination.*—A correspondent at Guildford writes as follows:—

About eight years ago I assisted at the removal of a supernumerary thumb from the left hand of an infant, who had been born with this additional member under the following circumstances. On the occurrence of the birth of a former child, inquiries were made of the husband by the lady's father regarding the health of his daughter, and received the satisfactory information that she was doing well, but that the child, "like all her children at birth, was little bigger than a thumb." The lady's father

(an octogenarian) dining with friends that day, and in his dotage misapprehending the observation, stated to his guests, as a very singular circumstance, "that all his daughter's children had been born with two thumbs on the left hand;" the observation excited much merriment, and the father's story was next day jocularly detailed to the daughter. She again became pregnant, and her mind reverted to the tale of a child with two thumbs on the left hand; and, during the whole period of gestation, her mind was under the conviction that her child would be born with this deformity. Her first inquiry after its birth was, "Nurse, has not the child two thumbs on the left hand?" It had. Within a month from the time at which the above case occurred, the wife of a tradesman in my vicinity gave birth to an infant with an exactly similar deformity, two thumbs on the left hand; but, unlike the mother in the former case, she had never for a moment entertained a thought of any malformation being likely to befall her child. To my mind these two cases strikingly illustrate the fallacy of the opinion that the mother's mind exerts any influence over the configuration of the fœtus in utero.—*Ibid.*

*New Hampshire Insane Asylum.*—It has been agreed upon by those immediately interested, that the location of the institution shall be selected by Drs. Woodward, Bell and Rockwell. The town of Portsmouth voted, in town meeting, on Monday, June 10th, to appropriate the surplus revenue belonging to the inhabitants, \$23,000, towards the establishment, provided it shall be erected in that town; in that case, funds to the amount of \$55,000 would be at the disposal of the trustees, towards commencing that much needed charity for the insane poor of the State.

*Mixtures.*—No. 6. R. Liquor ammon. acetat., 3iv.; vini antim. potassio-tartratis, 3ss.; vini ipecacuan., 3ij.; syrup. papav., 3ss.; aquæ destillat., 3xiv. M. Sumat 3i.—3vi. subinde. In catarrh.

No. 7. R. Vini ipecac., 3iss.; spir. æther. nitrici, 3iiss.; liquor ammon. acetat., 3ij.; vini antim. potassio-tartrat., 3iss.; mist. camphor. 3ivss.; syrup. papav., 3ij. M. Cochleare unum vel duo tertiis horis. In catarrh.

No. 8. R. Vini ipecacuan., 3iij.; syrup. tolutani, 3v.; mist. acaciæ, 3i. M. Sumat drachmam omni hora.

No. 9. R. Rad. althææ, herb. melissæ, herb. menthæ sativ., florum sambuci, florum arnicæ, 3i.; seminum anisi, 3ss. M. Fiat infusio pro potu ordinario.—*Copland.*

No. 10. R. infus. aurant., 3viij.; antim. potassio-tartrat., gr. iv.; syrup. papav., 3iv. M. Sumat cochleare unum amplum tertiis horis.

*Connecticut Medical Society.*—At the late meeting of the Fellows of the Connecticut Medical Society, who are chosen by the members at their county meetings, the following resolution was passed:

"Resolved, That a committee be appointed to take into consideration the present state of the affairs of the Connecticut Medical Society, and the propriety of so altering the Act of Incorporation of said Society, as hereafter to dispense with the appointment and pay of Fellows, and to substitute in place of the annual meeting of Fellows, an annual meeting of all the members of the Society; and that the committee suggest such other



alterations of the Act of Incorporation and of the By-laws of the Society as they may deem necessary, and that they report to the next convention."

Drs. A. Brigham, A. Sumner, and A. Welch, were appointed.

The committee to whom was referred the subject of an asylum for the insane poor, made the following report, which was accepted:

"That, in their opinion, the cause of humanity and the public good would be promoted by such an establishment. Such an institution has been advised by the Directors of the Retreat, by the former conventions of this Society, and by the committee of the Legislature to whom this subject was referred. We are of opinion that a committee of this Society should be appointed to confer with the Legislature, and express, as the opinion of the Connecticut Medical Society, their high estimation of the advantages which would accrue from the contemplated establishment."

The officers of the Society for the ensuing year, are Silas Fuller, M.D., *President*; Elijah Middlebrook, M.D., *Vice President*; Luther Ticknor, M.D., *Treasurer*; Archibald Welch, M.D., *Secretary*. The committee to whom was referred the subject of vaccination, recommend re-vaccination once in ten or twelve years.

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*Pathology of Porrijo.*—The observations of Bassi and Audouin on the nature of muscardine—a disease to which silkworms are subject—had proved that it was owing to the growth of minute fungi on the animal. Professor Schoenlein, of Zurich, has been led to examine, under the microscope, some cutaneous eruptions. On the first examination of a pustule of porrijo lupinosa, he satisfied himself of the vegetable and fungous nature of the pustule. Professor Schoenlein is busily employed in prosecuting this subject, and means soon to publish the results of his investigations.—*Müller's Archiv., from the London Medical Gazette.*

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*Medical Miscellany.*—A little girl, seven years old, was lately killed in Butler Co., Pennsylvania, by the bite of a rattlesnake.—It is computed that there are 2200 insane persons in Pennsylvania, having no provision made for their comfort or restoration.—Dr. McKimney, of Nashville, Tenn., who was about establishing a hospital at that place, has absconded, being, it is supposed, a defaulter to a large amount.—The measles are very prevalent in South Africa; it was thought that one fifth of the population were affected by the epidemic.—Tincture of common black pepper, combined with an equal quantity of spirits of turpentine, is recommended for tooth ache.—A physician of Boston is said to have given two hundred dollars to the treasurer of the Medical Society, to meet the current expenses of last year.—The present Board of Health in Charleston, S. C., are uncommonly vigilant, which encourages the inhabitants to hope for continued good health in the city.—At Madison, Indiana, by an accidental explosion of powder, an iron drill, several feet long, was shot almost its whole length through a laborer's head—entering the lower part of the jaw and passing out at the temple. The man is likely to recover.—Dr. Dyott, the great banking quack, of Philadelphia, has been sentenced to seven years in the Penitentiary, for his numerous villanies.—A man died of hydrophobia at Groenport, last week, who had been bitten in December by a rabid dog.—At Evansville, Io., a man, recently from England, was bitten by a rattlesnake, and died in thirty hours.

**MARRIED**,—In Boston, Henry G. Clark, M.D., to Miss M. G. N. Prescott.

**DIED**,—At Newmansville, Pa., Feb. 4, Dr. Cornelius T. Brackett, of Falmouth, Maine.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending June 15, 22. Males, 8—females, 14.

Of consumption, 4—bilious colic, 1—disease of the heart, 1—inflammation of the bowels, 1—scarlet fever, 4—dropsy on the brain, 1—rheumatic fever, 1—bowel complaint, 2—apoplexy, 1—convulsions, 1—acuties, 1—disease of the brain, 1—inflammatory fever, 1—stillborn, 1.

#### TO PHYSICIANS.

A PHYSICIAN who wishes to relinquish the practice, can hear of one of experience who would be glad to occupy his stand, and who can give the most unexceptionable references as to character, &c., by addressing a line to the editor, post paid. June 19—St

#### VACCINE VIRUS.

PHYSICIANS in any section of the United States can procure ten quills charged with PURE VACCINE VIRUS, by return mail, on addressing the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, enclosing one dollar, post paid, without which no letter will be taken from the post office. June 19

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GEORGE C. SHATTUCK,  
WALTER CHANNING,  
JOHN WARE,  
GEORGE W. OTIS, Jr.,  
WINSLOW LEWIS, Jr.

Oct. 31—eptf

#### TREMONT-STREET MEDICAL SCHOOL.

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7. A private dissecting room, in which during the last year an abundant supply of anatomical subjects has been gratuitously furnished.

Eighteen gentlemen have entered this school since its commencement in September last.

Boston, May 15, 1838.

2am6m

JACOB BIGELOW,  
EDWARD REYNOLDS,  
D. HUMPHREYS STORER,  
OLIVER W. HOLMES.

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Boston, August 1, 1838.

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